

Neck Road LLC

c/o Women's Institute Realty of Connecticut, Inc.

15 Court Square, Suite 210

Boston, MA 02108

August 29, 2019

Neck Road, LLC Shares Letter to Old Lyme Zoning Commission

Old Lyme, CT: On August 29, 2019, Neck Road, LLC, a partnership between the Women's Institute for Housing and Economic Development and HOPE Partnership delivered the following letter to the Old Lyme Zoning Commission and Board of Selectmen notifying them of their intent to withdraw plans for an approved, 37 unit affordable housing community in Old Lyme. Among the factors taken into consideration when reaching the decision, was an extended appeal of the Old Lyme Zoning Commission decision of August 2018 by abutting neighbors. HOPE Partnership's Board President stated, "Rather than continue to fight the battle in a courtroom, which will increase the costs so the housing is no longer affordable, HOPE is appealing to the many residents who expressed concerns over location to assist in finding a property that would be suitable. HOPE is committed to finding a solution to the ever growing need for affordable housing in Old Lyme and will continue to work towards our goal of providing safe and affordable housing for all our community members."

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Ms. Jane Cable, Chair  
Old Lyme Zoning Commission  
Town of Old Lyme  
52 Lyme Street  
Old Lyme CT 06371

Dear Ms. Cable,

As you know, Neck Road LLC, comprised of HOPE Partnership, Inc. ("HOPE") and Women's Institute for Housing and Economic Development ("WIHED"), is the applicant for River Oak Commons I and II, which was approved by the Zoning Commission in October 2018, subject to conditions, for a combined 37 units of affordable housing. The approval was subsequently appealed by abutting neighbors and is now moving through the appeals process.

Throughout the application and approval process, the project has been met with intense opposition. While there are many in Town who support the project, it has become increasingly apparent a very vocal faction of Old Lyme residents are not in support and will take whatever measures necessary to stop the project, including the promotion and spreading of misinformation using social media and other means to attack the project and its sponsors.

HOPE and WIHED are accustomed to receiving questions about our projects and are always happy to respond to legitimate concerns expressed by neighbors and town officials. However, the response to River Oak Commons I and II was like nothing we had ever encountered previously, and went well beyond legitimate concerns about traffic and safety. We have expended significant expense countering a campaign of opposition, stretching our financial resources in the process and created excess unnecessary cost that will make the project increasingly unaffordable for future residents.


Like everything we build, River Oak Commons would be extremely high quality and is well located for family housing. We have every expectation the project would prevail in any court appeal. Despite all this, a small group of Old Lyme residents will probably never accept the project, which may make future occupants of River Oak Commons feel unwelcome.

For these reasons we are extending an olive branch; HOPE and WIHED will withdraw our zoning application for River Oaks Commons I and II. However, we are appealing to town leaders and residents to follow through on the assertion we have heard expressed over and over; *"Old Lyme supports affordable housing, just not in that location..."*

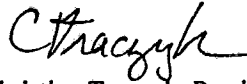
We ask that the Zoning Commission, Board of Selectman, and other town leaders to proactively identify site(s) that would be more acceptable for family housing. We further ask town leaders and neighborhood leaders who have been financially supporting the opposition, to help in this effort by identifying financial resources to allow a transfer to another location, through bonding, predevelopment assistance, tax relief, acquisition assistance, etc.

We would like to believe the support for the "idea" of affordable housing in Old Lyme was sincere. We are now asking those who expressed that sentiment to join us and be part of the solution.

Sincerely,



Anthony Lyons, President  
HOPE Partnership



Christine Traczyk, President  
Women's Institute for Housing and Economic Development

c.c:

**Zoning Commission:**

Jane Marsh-Secretary  
Paul Orzel -Member  
Gil Soucie- Member  
Alan Todd-Member  
Harvey Gemme-Alternate  
Katherine Klose-Alternate

**Board of Selectmen:**

Bonnie Reemsnyder, First Selectwoman  
Christopher Kerr, Selectman  
Mary Jo Nosal, Selectwoman